TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

In This Issue

• William G. Mather teaches rural sociology at the Pennsylvania State College. The paper beginning on page 1 is a condensation of an address delivered before the second general session of the Rochester Convocation. The address followed Dr. Hummel's statement on "Important Aspects of the Rural Life Situation in America," that appeared in our December issue.

• Henry W. McLaughlin, who contributes both poetry and prose on page 4, was until his recent retirement director of rural church services for the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.

• How does the United Church Canvass work in the towns? Rev. Norman L. Trott, now minister of St. Paul's Methodist Church, Hagerstown, Md., tells about what was done by the churches of Brunswick, Md., when he was a pastor there. See page 5.

• The way the same general plan worked in Springfield, Vt., is told by Richard F. Beyer, minister of the First Congregational Church. Page 7.

• Alfred C. Bartholomew, who is minister of the Pleasantville, Pa., Evangelical and Reformed Church (Eureka, Pa.), describes a systematic community study on page 6.

• Bernard M. Taylor who is at Alpine Parish, Alpine, Tenn., describes his parish on page 8.

• Richard Comfort, a minister of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., writes a thorough paper on recruiting for the rural ministry beginning on page 9. He is at Warren H. Wilson College, Swannanoa, N. C.

No. 41
February, 1948

The Rural Church Situation As Seen By a Social Scientist[1]

WILLIAM G. MATHER*

• There are many ways of looking at the rural church situation. The way of the social scientist is only one such way.

When a social scientist looks at a rural church he sees it as a group of people who have joined themselves together in a fellowship to bring all persons of their community into a relationship with God as their Father and all men as their brothers.

Measuring the Rural Church

Against the slant of that plumbline let us measure the rural church.

We have assumed in the past that the rural church is the farmer's church, and based our discussions on that premise. I doubt its validity.

In the United States as a whole there is in the rural area, as of July 1946, one nonfarming person for every farming person.[2] On the average, then, we can expect one nonfarming member for every farming member in the rural churches.

Pennsylvania has two rural nonfarming persons for every farming person. They belong to the same churches. Dorothy A. Colyer and Maurice L. Sill are now tabulating the results of a study of the churches in 27 selected Pennsylvania townships. Although farmers are a majority of the population in the unincorporated areas, and the townships were selected for their representativeness as agricultural sections, farm people form only 44 per cent of the total rural population—both incorporated borough and open-country. We would expect farm people to compose at least the same proportion, 44 per cent, of the church membership. They do not. They form only 35 per cent of the membership.

Has Not Reached Farmers

Two items stand out: a) Pennsylvania farmers are a minority of the membership in rural churches, and b) a smaller percentage of farmers than of rural nonfarmers are church members.

The Census of Religious Bodies of the United States in 1936[3] reported that church members were 52 per cent of the urban population but only 30 per cent of the rural population. Even when a 25-per cent correction is added to the rural figures for under-reporting, the difference is great.

The rural church just doesn't contain enough farmers. It has not reached the people it was established to reach.

There is another group of rural people that the rural church is missing. That is the growing number of people moving out from the city into the villages and open country of the suburban fringe. Earl Lomon Koos and Edmund de S. Brunner have published the results of their excellent study of suburbanization in Webster, New York, a village of 1680 persons in 1940 in a township of 5520 persons including the village, only a few miles west of Rochester. Koos and Brunner found[4] that of the families whose head commuted to Rochester to work, and who reported Protestant church membership, only 43.8 per cent reported membership in a Webster church. Of the similar nonfarm families employed within the community, 80 per cent were affiliated with a Webster church.

We can grant that the mixing of farmers, villagers of long residence, and recently-arrived city people in one warm, loyal fellowship is difficult—but we cannot escape the fact

1 Condensation of an address to the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country, Rochester, New York, November 4, 1947.

* Professor of Rural Sociology, The Pennsylvania State College.

2 U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Series P-S No. 19, February 20, 1947.

3 U. S. Census of Religious Bodies, 1936, Vol. 1, Table 13, p. 86. (Comparison made with 1940 population data.)

4 Earl Lomon Koos and Edmund deS. Brunner, Suburbanization in Webster, N. Y.; University of Rochester, 1945, pp. 54-58, 66-71.

that it is the obligation of the rural church, especially the village rural church, to do so. In spite of all our excuses and reasons for failure there remains the eleventh commandment, "that ye love one another."[5]

Farm Situation Changing

An additional complication of the matter of the rural church as an all-inclusive fellowship arises from the current change in the social and economic status of farmers themselves.

Due to the larger acreage and more machinery needed for successful operation of an efficient farm, the cost of beginning farming has greatly increased. The large sum involved, and the risk of loss of equity, restricts the number of people who can or will buy farms.

In certain areas there is an increase in "corporation farms," owned by groups of business men. In others there is an increase of farms of the "estate" type, usually in the vicinity of large cities, for playthings or showplaces or income tax-loss-recording devices for city men and their families. In other areas, a successful farmer may buy up several farms in addition to his own, and operate them by tenants or hired labor.

In any event, the long-run tendency is toward an increase of tenants, of hired farm managers, and of transient labor in the rural parish. This is particularly marked in the Midwest.[6] Tenants and hired laborers do not become, as a rule, very active supporters of the established churches.

Difficult Constituencies

Displacement of owner-operators by tenants and hired laborers gives the church a difficult type of constituent to minister to. There will be a temptation to abandon attempts to serve the whole community, and to serve only the dwindling resident-owner and landlord class. Rural churches that take this course can expect to die. They have already begun so to die in high-tenancy areas.[7]

The ethical and moral climate in which this imperfect little fellowship with the great commission functions is rapidly changing. It is changing in the local community, right about the doorstep of the little brown church, right down in its own wooded vale. Some things are happening in rural life that we never expected would ever happen. The methods of farming have changed, and with them the farmer has changed.

The farmer now farms for the surplus. He grows crops to sell. He is not interested so much as formerly in "a way of life"—he is more interested in a way of making a living. Farming is a business; a competitive, corner-cutting business. By its rules, a farmer aims to raise the biggest crops at the lowest cost to be sold at the highest price. He sells the product and with the money he buys the family's bread, milk, butter, vegetables, eggs, and meat. This he must do to compete successfully.

The farmer is now operating in a money economy. He must face the moral and ethical problems involved. Here is a task for the rural church indeed.

Farm income is now at an all time high. The incomes of persons on farms from agriculture and government payments was up 21 per cent in 1946 over 1945, while that of persons not living on farms was up less than one per cent.[8] For the first eight months of 1947 the cash receipts of farmers for the same sources was up 26 per cent over 1946. Farm production costs had risen only 9 per cent a year since 1943.[9]

The Strain of Prosperity

But a close study of the statistics on consumer savings in the United States in 1946 shows that no more farmers are saving the current earnings than are city men.[10] The tradition of rural thrift has not held up under the strain of prosperity.

Certainly the rural black market in farm machinery has been little different from the city black market in automobiles.

The thirteen most rural-farm counties of Pennsylvania spent 43 per cent more at their State liquor stores in 1945 than they did in 1940.

The number of divorces in the eleven of these Pennsylvania rural-farm counties for which figures are available increased 155 per cent from 1940 to 1945. In the United States as a whole, including the cities, the increase was only 90 per cent.

Juvenile delinquency in the five Pennsylvania rural-farm counties for which figures are available increased 63 per cent from 1940 to 1945. For the United States as a whole, including the cities, the rise was only about 25 to 30 per cent.

Rural Crime

In the United States as a whole, the F.B.I. reports for the first 6 months of 1947, rural crime is up 7.5 per cent while urban crime is *down* 2.3 per cent.[11] In the whole year of 1946, rural crime increased twice as fast as urban crime.[12]

Certainly this array of evidence, although largely straws in the wind, plainly indicates that the difference in morals that used to exist between city and country is fast disappearing, as modern transportation and communication make themselves felt.

It is not enough to look at the rural church in its local setting alone. The boundaries of the rural parish are not very high or strong walls—over them and through them come the powerful forces of world events to shape the lives of its people.

In 1932, for instance, millions of city folk were out of work. They couldn't buy what the farmer had to sell. Farmers planted about the same acreage as usual, but the weather was bad in spots so the volume of production dropped a little—only 4 per cent below the 5-

5 John 13:34.
6 University of Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin No. 502, "Improving Farm Tenure in the Midwest," 1944.

7 Kolb and Brunner, *A Study of Rural Society*, 1946 Edition, p. 516.
8 U.S.D.A., The Farm Income Situation, September 4, 1945, pp. 14 and 15.
9 Same, pp. 2 and 13.
10 Federal Reserve Bulletin, August 1947, p. 957.

11 Uniform Crime Reports, U. S. Department of Justice, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, p. 1.
12 Same, Vol. XVII, No. 2, p. 77.

ear average. Prices fell so far be-
ause of the lack of city buying
ower, however, that farm income
ropped to less than 50 per cent of
he 5-year average.[13] In other words,
he farmer in the rural parish work-
d about as hard as before, produced
bout as much as before, but got half
s much for it because of what
appened in the city.

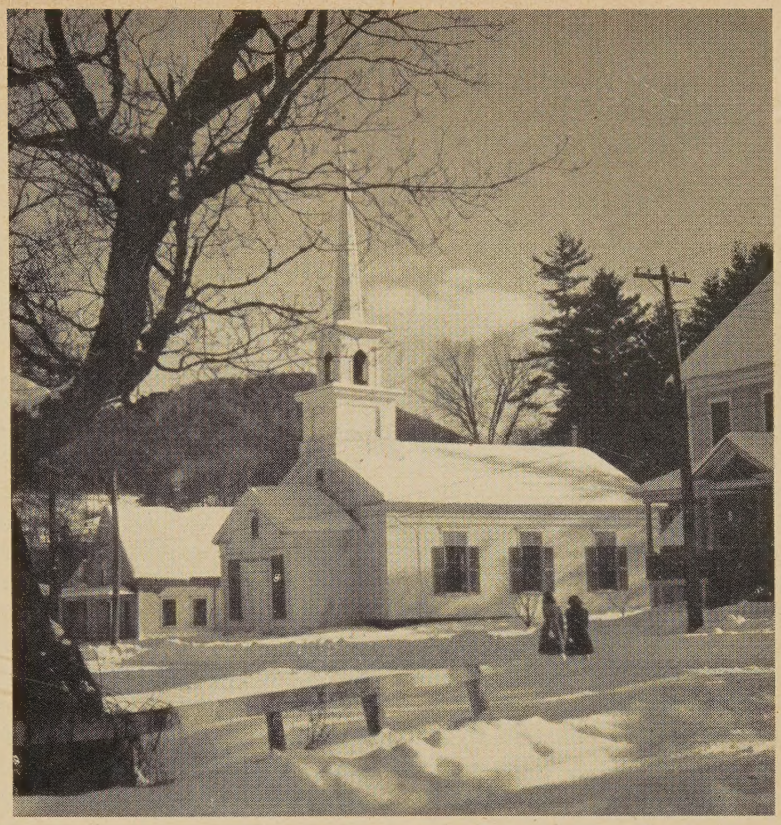
Time went on. Europe and then
he United States became involved in
ar. By 1946 the shooting part was
ver, but Europe with her fields and
erds and machinery ruined was still
ooking to the United States for
ood. And the United States, with
ome money left from her wartime
rofits, was eating more than ever
efore. The demand and ability to
ay was high.

In 1946 the farmer planted fewer
cres than in 1932,[14] but because of
etter bred plants and animals and
etter weather he produced nearly
0 per cent more than in 1932. This
ime the prices were so high that he
ot for his 40 per cent more produc-
ion almost 5 times as much income
s in 1932.[15]

Beyond the Rural Community

There is the story of how events
eyond the rural community can
hake it to its roots with fear and
lespair and lift it up above the hills
with joy. The average farmer should
e as interested in and informed
bout what happens in Palestine or
Greece or Argentina as he is in
whether to plant corn or wheat on
his back twenty acres.

We have available now some very interesting reports of the National Opinion Research Center concerning farmer attitudes toward Russia which we can use as an example of his international outlook. We find that a larger minority of the farmers than any other occupational group believe that our disputes with Russia warrant war. A smaller portion of them believe that our newspapers make Russia look worse than she is—only 33 per cent of the farmers as compared to 53 per cent of the business men. Whereas 65 per cent of the business men want our government to tell us more about Russia, only 48 per cent of the farmers do.



Church at Lyndon, Vermont

—*A. Devaney, Inc.*

Farmer Opinion

Whereas 91 per cent of the business men believe that the common people of either country could never start a war between Russia and the United States, only 82 per cent of the farmers think so.[16] A free press in both Russia and the United States would make for better understanding between the people in the opinion of 73 per cent of the professional and managerial persons, but only 60 per cent of the farmers. Only 40 per cent think American publishers should have the right to send papers and magazines to Russia, and only 35 per cent think the Russians should have the right to send such materials here.[17] In all of these instances the farmer attitude, *as measured in the same polls of opinion,* compares most closely with the attitudes held by the poor, the less-than-eighth-grade-education group, and domestic and personal service employees.

On the matter of naming correctly the two countries whom President Truman wanted to send $400,000,000 to, and the two peoples having serious trouble in Palestine, only half as many farmers gave the correct answers and twice as many completely wrong or said they didn't know, as in the general population.[18]

We have two straws in the wind from these opinion polls indicating somewhat the farmer's understanding of the welfare of other American groups beyond his local parish. Rising prices of the past few years have pinched the white collar group of salaried workers, and 56 per cent of the business men favored a rise in pay for civil service employees; only 32 per cent of the farmers did.[19] A

13 Agricultural Outlook Charts, Book Two, pp. 6-8, U.S.D.A., December 1946.
14 The Agricultural Situation, January 1946, p. 2; Agricultural Statistics, 1946, table 597, p. 539.
15 Agricultural Outlook Charts, December 1946, p. 6.

16 Opinion News, December 1946.
17 Unpublished materials of the National Opinion Research Center.

18 Unpublished materials of the National Opinion Research Center.
19 Opinion News, December 1945.

law against discrimination in employment on grounds of race or religion was favored by only 25 per cent of the farmers as compared with 43 per cent of the business men.[20]

Must Be Born Again

This all may be but a result of the preoccupation of the church with itself everywhere. But whatever it is, it must come to an end. The rural church must be born again into the reality of the modern world where no germ, no fear, no hunger, no pain, no cruelty and no sin is a local matter. The modern rural community is as wide as the earth, as deep as Hell, as high as Heaven. To that community the rural church dares to say that all men, everywhere, are eligible for the Kingdom. It must dare to say that God sent His Son to die for the Russian, and the Jew, and the member of the C.I.O. as well as for the Patron of Husbandry. It must have such faith in the wisdom and mercy of God and the ultimate goodness resident in Man that it can stand upright in the open, like a farmer in the center of a great field, and say with confident heart, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy Presence?"

December 3, 1947

Editor
TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH
297 Fourth Avenue
New York 10, New York

DEAR SIR:

It is indeed most pleasing to read the November issue of TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH. It is always refreshing. I could not tell you how much we appreciate the friendly and kindly references you are making to *Land and Home* and the *Christian Farmer Newsletter.*

My every good wish and kindest regards.

Very sincerely yours,
L. G. LIGUTTI
Executive Secretary National Catholic Rural Life Conference

---

20 Ibid.

Christ and the Country People

HENRY W. McLAUGHLIN

• A few days ago, I heard over the radio an excellent and challenging address by a Roman Catholic speaker. His theme was "Take Christ to the Country—Bring the Country to Christ." This inspiring broadcaster set my pen to going.

The church that takes Christ to the country people and brings the country people to Christ is a church of the future. The countrysides where large families are reared are the sources of society. If the Catholic Church takes Christ to the country people and brings the country people to Christ, this in time will be a Roman Catholic nation.

We admire the Catholics for the wisdom and excellency of their program. They advocate that their ablest priests and most attractive teachers be sent to peoples of rural areas.

Most of the farmers of America are Protestants by preference. If the Protestant churches take Christ to the country people and bring the country people to Christ, America will remain Protestant. Suppose no one takes Christ to the country people and no one brings the country people to Christ; America then will be pagan.

It would be far better for Protestants if America were Catholic rather than dominated by godless paganism. If Communism were Christian in faith and practice, we need not be alarmed. A paganism that denies the existence of God, dethrones Christ, and tramples under foot the divinely inherited rights of men should be dreaded by Catholics and Protestants. This is true alike of paganism whether it be in a communistic, Fascist, or capitalistic order of society. If we have a pagan America, the security of our properties, our homes, and our democratic ways of life will be lost. If America should become either Pagan or Roman Catholic, it will be because the country people, Protestant by preference, have been neglected by our churches.

A Challenge to Musicians

I happen to remember that someone has said in substance: "Permit me to write a nation's songs and I care not who writes its laws."

Inspired by a Catholic broadcaster, I have written a hymn "Our Christ We Give." A challenge is presented to musicians to compose music suitable to be used with it.

Our Christ We Give

From vales and hills of northern Maine,
To far off Texas' southern plain,
From lands where giant Redwoods grow,
To where the eastern rivers flow,
Our farmers and their families dwell
On plain and hill in dale and dell.
To them our Christ we gladly give,
His Gospel truths in joy to live.

For those who plow and sow the seeds,
In spring or fall, have urgent needs.
More true of folk in open spaces
Than true of those in urban places:
The need to share the nation's wealth,
And even more the care for health.
To them our Christ we gladly give
His Gospel truths in joy to live.

When 'long the lonely roads one rides
And meets the folks of countrysides
And learns how seldom and how rare
They have an able pastor's care
To tell of Christ's abounding grace
To fit for life and death to face,
To them our Christ we gladly give
His Gospel truths in joy to live.

Rural Reading List

• A forty-page brochure, listing publications related to rural life, has been compiled by the Rural Library Committee of the United States Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture Library. Single copies may be procured free of charge by writing to the United States Department of Agriculture Library, Washington 25, D. C., requesting "Library List No. 39." In this pamphlet nearly 400 titles of books and pamphlets are annotated and grouped under the following headings: *Agricultural Economics, Rural Sociology, Political Science and History, Creative Living, Education, Religion and Philosophy, Home Economics, Science and Technology.*

Town & Country Church

Published monthly (except June, July, ugust) by the Committee on Town and ountry, Home Missions Council of N.A., e Federal Council of the Churches of hrist in America, and the International ouncil of Religious Education.

15c a copy; One Dollar a Year

Publication Office: Tenth and Scull reets, Lebanon, Pa.

Editorial Office: 297 Fourth Avenue, New ork 10, N. Y.

Entered as second class matter at the ost Office at Lebanon, Pa., under the Act f March 3, 1879.

Board of Editors

Rural Church Officers

The following persons with responsibility or town and country church in the religious bodies and interdenominational agencies constitute the *Board of Editors:*

EDWIN L. BECKER, United Christian Missionary Society, Disciples of Christ; Chairman of the Committee on Town and Country.

MARK A. DAWBER, Executive Secretary, Home Missions Council of North America.

V. A. EDWARDS, Director of Rural Work, National Baptist Convention.

ELLIOTT L. FISHER, Superintendent Town nd Country, Board of Missions and Church Extension, the Methodist Church.

KARL S. HENRY, Board of American Missions, United Lutheran Church in America.

BENJAMIN H. CAIN, Evangelical United Brethren.

HENRY S. RANDOLPH, Unit of Rural Church Work, Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

MARK RICH, Town and Country Work, American Baptist Home Mission Society.

CLIFFORD L. SAMUELSON, Division of Domestic Missions, National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

CLAUDE J. SNYDER, Board of National Missions, Evangelical and Reformed Church.

THOMAS ALFRED TRIPP, Town and Country Department, Board of Home Missions, Congregational Christian Churches.

IRA W. MOOMAW, Church of the Brethren.

BENSON Y. LANDIS, Secretary, Committee on Town and Country, Managing Editor.

DON F. PIELSTICK, Associate Secretary.

How the United Church Canvass Improved a Town's Religion

NORMAN L. TROTT

• A couple of years ago the ministers in the town of Brunswick, Md., learned about a new religious idea that was being promoted. It was called the United Church Canvass.

Two Main Ideas

The plan embodied roughly two main ideas: A commonly accepted time when all the churches of a community would make their annual financial canvasses simultaneously and preliminary publicity to prepare the community for the event.

At Brunswick some of the churches were accustomed to holding a financial canvass in late November to underwrite the budget for a fiscal year beginning January first. Other churches however held no specific canvass for funds, relying upon unsolicited gifts to carry them along. Most of the churches were in this later category, my own church among them.

Agreed to Share

However the type of material obtainable through the United Church Canvass Plan was so excellent that all our churches agreed to share in the plan of publicity. The idea here was twofold: First, the publicity would help to "sell" the idea of religious values to the community and the need to support them. Second, the publicity would provide a favorable background against which those churches having financial campaigns could work. But all would benefit by the tone of the publicity, since this was designed to sell an idea rather than to sell a date.

Surprisingly, after seeing our publicity plans, every church in the community expressed a desire to share in the program: Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish (although the small Jewish group had no local synagogue); Negro and white; established congregations and the newer "sects." This was true for every year the program has been worked so far. There are eleven such religious groups in Brunswick, a town of 4000. We set up a modest budget of $100 and prorated expenses according to the size of the church.

The Publicity

The publicity itself was designed to run over a six-week period involving the last two weeks in October and the weeks of November. Surprisingly enough, we were able to provide publicity that was general enough in tone to embrace all groups and yet specific enough to get across the idea of the primary importance of religion in the life of the community and the need to support every community's churches and synagogues. The material prepared by the United Church Canvass agency was very valuable.

Details concerning the nature and use of the publicity material follows:

Series of Ads

First, a series of six weekly ads were run in the local *weekly* newspaper. We ran a half to full page, back page ad each week during this period. Ads already designed were available at the United Church Canvass headquarters. A mat of the ad could be purchased at a very nominal cost and all the printer had to do was set up his casting from this mat and add to it the local copy which simply referred to the local sponsorship, etc. Small town weeklies are very reasonable in the cost of advertising, hence the reason for our modest budget.

Posters

Second, beautiful posters displaying a religious picture and bearing a local inscription were posted in public places and store windows throughout the town and country-

side. These too were purchased at the U.C.C. headquarters.

Third, we purchased in quantity a pamphlet extolling the value of the church and the need to support it. This we made available to the churches in the desired quantities. On the back page of the pamphlet (which was blank when purchased) we printed the list of participating churches.

News Article

Fourth. We ran a weekly news article in the local paper during the whole promotional period. The articles told the story of the Canvass plan, listed participating churches, gave the dates when some of the churches would be having their every-member canvass, and reported on the work of the churches in the community.

The blessings derived from this united effort were numerous. For one thing, the community was impressed by the fact that all the religious groups could join in a common effort. We of the churches all felt better towards one another, and the community had a healthier respect for the religious groups of the town.

Blessings Derived

We found that attendance was always improved during this period of publicity for the attention of people was focused on the Church. This was cumulative.

Next, those churches which had their financial drives in this period found it easier to do the job, and better results were obtained.

Personally, I am convinced that every community would be greatly benefited by a "united Church" publicity effort at least once a year. I am also sure that our church groups should work toward a specific date each year when all church groups would launch their financial drives and canvasses. We could then, on a local and also a national scale, undergird such drives with adequate and effective publicity. We would do well to note the effective way in which national publicity undergirds the thousands of local Community Chest drives which take place each year. To that end I believe that the United Church Canvass Plan is a great plan for every community to adopt and for our denominations to undergird on a national scale.

There have been numerous stories of the plan's effective use in cities across the land. I want to add to these the way in which one small town worked the plan and was blessed, and hope that other small towns and communities will enjoy its benefits too.

A Community Survey

ALFRED C. BARTHOLOMEW

• There hangs on the door of the church study a map-chart of our community. On it is mapped every home in the area. Each home is marked by a symbol which tells the reader at a glance the church connection of the people there. The calling which preceded the making of the map-chart was made by the young people of the church under the supervision of the pastor. These young folks were given an area to cover, in a given time, and a card to be filled out for each home.

The boundaries of the parish decided upon were made by taking a point midway between our church and each neighboring Protestant church. The parish consists of approximately twenty square miles. The results were that 378 cards were filled out and our young people had discovered the value of calling, valuable both to themselves and to those called upon. They discovered loneliness, timidity, and a desire for belonging where they had believed only indifference resided.

Since our church territory is completely rural, the survey was conducted mostly by bicycle. We discovered that seven-eighths of the homes are owned, and that the community is divided almost equally into farming and residential areas. We found that there were 378 homes in the community. No report was obtained of 76 of these either because of absence or because they refused to give any information. Of those visited 17% of the families were members of our own church, while 20% were families active in other Protestant churches. The Catholic families numbered 23% and we found that they lived almost entirely in the section in which their church is located. 4% were Jewish. To the East is a growing Jewish community which has a synagogue but no rabbi. 36% are unchurched. 50% of these implied that they would prefer not to be asked to go to church, while the others expressed some interest.

There are only two churches in these twenty square miles, a Roman Catholic and our own—Pleasantville Evangelical and Reformed. Consequently, the community is our responsibility. With the findings we have been able to plan a more adequate church program. We have made initial steps for a visitation evangelism to reach the families of the "36%." Our church program has included a recreation center for the Junior-Senior High School age group; the setting up of circles sewing for relief, with members including the unchurched; and the pastor has been able to know definitely which families in the community were reached by him alone.

We have found that the survey entailed a great deal of work but the compensation (in terms of interest on the part of the congregation in the immediate community) has been most rewarding. This congregation, like most other open country churches in South Eastern Pennsylvania, finds its congregation moving into small towns away from the farm homes. Moreover there is a rapid growth of homes built on one to five acres as residences for industrial and professional persons whose work is in the metropolitan area. Consequently, keeping the church and the community as one is a task which must be worked at and not taken for granted. It is necessary to keep the members of the congregation concerned about the community as a church community, and this survey has been a step in that direction.

A United Church Canvass in Vermont

RICHARD F. BEYER

• Our town of Springfield, Vermont, is used to progressive ideas so it did not require much of a "selling effort" to get the new plan well launched. Five of our churches caught on at once. Others—because of inherent conditions—were unable to rearrange their plans to make possible their cooperation.

The five churches were invited to send two church officers and the minister to an initial meeting. This committee canvassed the total situation and reported back to the churches. Each church acted separately upon the plan and named two persons to the working committee. The local clergy named one of their number to this committee, making eleven. This committee named one of their number—a layman—as chairman of the committee.

The publicity committee and the laymen's banquet committee were the two important committees.

Items of Importance

Three items of importance may be mentioned in connection with the publicity effort: Available newspaper "mats" from headquarters were effectively used; the separate story of each participating church was graphically told in the newspace; window cards—18 x 28—were printed on top and bottom *United Church Canvass,* with dates below. The middle of the card was left blank. These cards were taken to the art department of our high school, and the young people were asked to cooperate by furnishing the appropriate and "telling" picture.

These were then placed in store windows about town. Prizes for the best drawings were considered but not adopted. It is the thought of the writer that some recognition might have been given those who cooperated so well in the undertaking. Without any question the most helpful promotion item was a nicely printed mailing card measuring 5½" x 8" which gave the local skyline of church steeples. One of our local artists made us a nice pen sketch of the steeples of the five participating churches.

Message Brief

The message on the card was brief and to the point announcing Loyalty Sunday when subscriptions would be brought to Morning Service and dedicated. The Laymen's Banquet for all canvassers was announced for the following Friday with the final campaign the succeeding Sunday when all parishioners of the churches who had not sent in their pledges would be visited between the hours of 2:30 and 6:30.

The laymen's banquet committee did an excellent piece of work securing attendance of about 160 canvassers. Too much importance cannot be placed upon the need of securing the best available speaker for this occasion. In our case, our chosen speaker had to disappoint us at the last moment. A hurried effort secured a very fine man who suffered the disadvantage of having insufficient time to develop his most persuasive address. It would seem that a second possible speaker should be carefully selected in case of disappointment.

Have Laymen Speak

In the judgment of our local committee the speaker for this occasion should certainly be a layman (not necessarily eloquent) who has the Church very deeply upon his heart and mind and can speak with a measure of real conviction concerning the need of laymen like himself to give themselves with pride and joy to the task of supporting it—and working for it.

If—in addition to this "inspirational note" which must be there—he can bring some few suggestions, based upon experience, as to what should be in the mind of the Canvasser as he rings the doorbell of the home and what his best approach should be, this will greatly help the men who say "I wish I knew just how to go about an errand like this. I know it's got to be done—but I'm frank to say I don't relish it." There are many such men—and often men who love the church and are ready to "put themselves out" for it. They need some definite help and encouragement and the laymen's banquet speaker should be the sort of a person who can give it.

Sunday service in the First Church of Christ, Glastonbury, Conn.
—*A. Devaney, Inc.*

Encouraging Features

There are two things that appear very clear after our first experience in Springfield, Vermont. Success depends upon laying plans well in advance—beginning four months before the canvass. Then a well planned "time-table" must be adopted for each progressive step in the campaign, and this time-schedule must be followed as closely as possible.

It will be of interest to know that after our first experience with the United Canvass the summary report included these encouraging features.

First—all churches that cooperated were impressed with the results and approved repetition of the experiment.

Second: The general feeling was that—quite apart from the financial result—the happy cooperation of five Protestant churches of the community in this enterprise was itself a satisfying experience.

Third: The impact of this simultaneous effort was somewhat "dramatic," and many people who ordinarily find it somewhat easy to think of themselves as "unattached" to any church were led to feel that "these are our churches: they belong to our community, and we belong to the community: hence we owe something to them—whether we are regular attendants or not." This, it seems to the writer, may have been the most outstanding result of the Canvasses.

Fourth: Each of the churches reported achievement of Goal, or admitted that they came closer to it than they expected. Each church reported a more than average increase of new subscribers—one church of five hundred members listing about one hundred new givers.

All in all, the United Canvass was so satisfying—morally and spiritually as well as financially—it left all of us who had anything to do with it eager to tackle the job again to see how much better we could do another year.

(The address of United Church Canvass is 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y. Consult your denominational officials concerning it.)

The Alpine Parish

BERNARD M. TAYLOR

• We are working for "the Christian development of rural community life." Our aim is: "Every home a Christian home in a Christian Community." Well-attended and helpful services in the regular church program are essential. Rev. Ira Sadler, a graduate of Alpine Institute, recently conducted one of the finest series of evangelistic meetings of recent years.

Sunday School attendance is reaching the 100 mark. Stewardship improvement is shown in the fact that during our ministry the share of the pastor's salary paid locally has increased 60%, and the benevolences are up 200%. Eighteen new members have been received into the church since our return including seven married couples.

For years we have dreamed and worked toward having our promising young people stay at home to establish their new families. Today we are happy to see people working at pottery, weaving, wood-working, forestry, lumbering, and improved agriculture. Members of 21 local families gain considerable support for themselves and the 84 members of their families through these adventures of faith, our church-born industries.

We still must do some direct relief work involving health care and gift boxes of clothing and fruit and food at Christmas. The industries are not yet large enough to do more than scratch the surface, but they are making a difference. It is wonderful to see the revolutionary change worked in the lives of certain individuals by means of a spiritual awakening combined with economic opportunity.

The Dale Hollow Tuberculosis Center is a project sponsored by the local people in the interdenominational parish. It was opened June 29th in S.A.D. Smith Cottage, the girls' dormitory formerly. Miss Mary Liter, R.N., is in charge. Tuberculosis is too common in this parish. Often all family resources have been used up and other members of the family have contracted the disease before slow recovery comes, if it comes. Local people have given $2000 at real sacrifice to pay the running expenses of the sanitarium.

The Methodist Board pays the nurse, and the Presbyterian Board provides the building, heated and lighted. Overton County has granted what financial aid was available. No state aid has been given so far. Rev. Vernon Bradley, larger parish Methodist pastor, is chairman of the board, and Anne Taylor of our community is the treasurer. By faith we face this urgent need. People from the area brought canned goods and other food stuff to the sanitarium on Thanksgiving Sunday.

The new community-built basement lunch-room at the grammar school is an important factor in the prevention of tuberculosis. A hot noon meal builds the resistance of 150 children at 10c each. Friends who had a share in making this possible ought to see it in operation!

The Dale Hollow Larger Parish, of which Alpine is the Presbyterian part, gives a religious ministry to some 4000 people in Overton and Pickett Counties through the cooperation of Disciple, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches. The staff, composed of ministers and laymen from the three denominations, carries on work in 18 organized churches and preaching points in our 100 square mile area.

If you plant a seed and it does not grow,
There is something wrong with the soil, you know;
And so, if you plant a thought that is kind,
In a little garden we call the mind,
And it does not grow into fruitful deeds,
But is choked by a lot of ugly weeds,
There is something wrong with the place it fills,
And the guiding power of the mind that wills;
But the planted thought, like the planted seed,
May grow and flourish into fruitful deed,
If you keep it alive with actions that tell
You have sought to nourish and train it well.

—*Anon.*

The Challenge of the Rural Ministry

RICHARD COMFORT

• In recruiting for the rural ministry we must be both realistic and challenging. We must be realistic about the problems and requirements for the rural ministry and challenging in presenting the pioneering jobs to be done and the compensations to be derived from the life of the rural minister. The rural minister has a unique opportunity to inspire the rural people of the world to live Christian lives and to work together to help build the kingdom of God on earth.

In 1940 in the United States 43.5 per cent of the people lived in rural areas. However, a large part of the country is predominantly rural. The most rural areas are the South Atlantic, South Central, and West North Central states. Throughout the world one out of every two gainfully employed men is a farmer. The rural people of the world are producing most of the future population of the world. These two basic facts are sufficient to point out the strategic place which those living in rural areas hold for the future peace and prosperity of the world. From many points of view the rural people of the world are the most important single group to which the Christian gospel must be carried.

The Economic Level

Almost universally the rural people are living on a lower economic level and have had less formal education than have those living in urban areas. Of course there are exceptions to this statement but these exceptions are few and often apply to only a limited number in the total rural population. A large percentage of the "Silent Billion" who are illiterate are to be found in rural areas throughout the world. People who are illiterate and living in conditions which are not conducive to health and security find it very difficult to understand and profess faith in the Christian religion, particularly when living near those who are educated and have plenty of money.

The challenge to christianize the rural areas of the world is urgent. This job cannot wait. It must be done in these days. It is not easy, but it is an extremely important task. We cannot have peace and security in our world when a large portion of the people are illiterate, underprivileged and unchristian. We cannot change these situations until we have a large number of young people who will train themselves and dedicate their lives to the cause of rural missions, both at home and abroad.

No Dull Moments

The task of the rural minister is an interesting one which involves a great number of varied activities. There are no dull moments as one tries to build a more Christian community. It is not enough to serve a church these days for the rural minister must be a leader in applying the Christian ethic to community life. This has become the purpose of a large number of ministers in recent times. Dr. Paul Doran gave a large part of his life to the job of making Calf Killer Valley in the Cumberland Mountains of Tennessee a place where the people were guided by the teaching of Jesus day by day. His activities were not limited to the work of the church. He helped the people in any way he could and was constantly thinking of them, of their welfare, and of their progress.

Some rural ministers realized that their greatest contribution to world peace is their work in the community in which they live. They cannot attend world peace conferences but they can create the ideas and attitudes in the minds of their neighbors which will make for understanding and world order. In their sermons, pastoral calling and community work they can sow those seeds which will take root in the minds of people and help them develop into Christian men and women. If democracy will not work in our local communities surely it will not operate in the more complex social structure of the nations and the world. If Christianity cannot be made the basis of community life surely it cannot be the basis of world living. The active and alert minister can be an experimenter to see whether in his local community these ideas which we profess to believe to be the salvation of the world can be practiced in daily life. If enough communities can find ways of practicing the Christian religion in all areas of their lives then we may find ways of extending it to larger areas.

The Pioneer

The rural minister today needs to be a pioneer. He must discover new ways for the different denominations in his communuity to work together, because a little less than half of the people in the United States belong to the church, and it will take a united approach on the part of the churches if they are to make a significant impact upon the life of the community. In some areas of rural America there is a tragic duplication of time, energy, and money on the part of church people while other areas are almost totally neglected by all church groups. This is neither wise churchmanship nor sound Christianity. Rural ministers need to pioneer in the realm of positive Christianity because we have had too much of the "thou shalt nots" from the pulpit. "This do and thou shalt live" should be our guide for the future. We need a religion to live for as well as one to care for us after this life.

We must reconstruct America with the rest of the world and rehabilitate it so that it may take its rightful place in the world. For America, as for the rest of the world, this is basically a spiritual job. We have enough of the material things of life for all in our land if they were distributed correctly. We must learn to be "our brother's keeper." We have not learned to do this yet. The great frontier that is ahead of us is in the area of human relations. The church must take the lead in pioneering in this frontier as it has

done in others in days gone by. The Christian faith has many of the answers to the complicated issues in this frontier and it will take intelligent, dedicated, fearless rural ministers to lead the Christian people in their churches to recognize and live by these answers. We must learn to use the resources that God has given us for the welfare of all mankind. We must learn to be Christian stewards.

Individual and Society

We have to save the individual and society at the same time. We cannot save one without saving the other. Professed faith in Christ and his teachings is meaningless for the individual unless this faith bears fruit in good works. It is the good works of individual Christians that will make a Christian society.

The most important task confronting the rural minister is to spiritualize rural life. He must do this by working with the people in his community. He must perform it in a meaningful way so that his work will produce Christian character. It is not enough to be scientifically correct and to have a sound program for rural people. In the last analysis, as Arthur Mosher has said, the minister's task is "to reach the human heart, and that is a task for an artist."

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Special Training

In addition to his regular college and seminary training a young man looking forward to the rural ministry needs to have some special training in the field of the rural church. In all of the larger geographical areas of America there are seminaries which give special training in the field as a regular part of the seminary course, and within recent years there has been a more rapid development of rural church departments in seminaries. Although all of the seminaries do not offer work in this field, any person desiring to receive this training can now find a wide variety of seminaries from which to choose. It is desirable for the potential rural minister to have a farm background and to have attended an agricultural college for at least a part of his formal training. It is helpful for the rural minister to know the vast resources that are available from the agricultural colleges and extension divisions in the states.

Practical Experience

Besides his formal training the rural minister needs to have some practical experience in farm life. If a man is to serve people he must understand their problems and their work. Without this understanding his sermons are as "sounding brass" and his pastoral work is as a "tinkling cymbal." To build the Christian community one has to be interested in all aspects of the lives of his parishioners. A recent study lists some of the following qualifications necessary for the rural minister.

1. He should choose the rural field because he sees its significance and desires to serve it.
2. He should know enough about rural people to be able to understand them and to apprehend their reactions. This knowledge cannot be acquired from books or lectures or courses of study.
3. He should have an abiding love of nature, know and feel his environment, and think of it as holy.
4. He should understand something of the content of farming and rural affairs, that he may have a background and be able to judge the situation of his people and to speak their language.
5. He should be able to forget the conveniences of city life. (Many rural manses and parsonages are modern now.)
6. He should be satisfied to live on the same level with his people but should constantly strive to lift the level of all.
7. He should have a sound personal religion with good grounds for believing it, a love of people, a lot of patience, a willingness to use his head, and a willingness to let God do a bit in His own way.
8. He should be very adaptable and have a creative mind and spirit.
9. He should have all human affairs on his heart and mind.
10. He should understand youth needs and be able to lead young people.
11. He should be able to develop a recreation program where needed.
12. He should know when to rely on experts instead of dabbling in everything himself.
13. He should cooperate with the other social institutions in the community which are working for the betterment of the people.
14. He should understand the significance of his opportunity in the total social setting and dedicate himself to a constructive and creative piece of work with the people whom he is serving.
15. He must have the rural heart beat.

There are many compensations for those who look forward to the rural ministry. There is a growing awareness on the part of the various denominations that there should be parity in the ministry with reference to salaries. The salaries of most ministers are low but often those of the rural ministers are even lower than those who labor in the cities. Progress is being made to make it pos-

sible for a man to serve the rural church and be able to maintain a decent standard of living and provide for his family. This is all that most ministers want for few men become ministers if they expect to be wealthy from the salaries they receive. A young man might reasonably expect that the salaries of rural ministers will slowly become higher and that he will not be penalized financially because of his desire to serve the rural church. Some denominations are establishing minimum salary plans which are working out very well. Many churches provide a house for the minister and these are becoming more modern as old ones are repaired and new ones are built.

Opportunities For Leadership

A man in the rural ministry often has good living conditions and desirable surroundings for his family to live in and grow up. In a small community he has many opportunities for leadership and can influence the life of the total community. He has the satisfaction of knowing that he can do a significant job with an important group of people. He often can see the results of his work as young people develop under his influence. If he has done his work well he knows that he has helped send another young Christian from rural America to the urban areas of our land. It has been shown that most people decide to be Christian while they are young. Most of the young people come from rural areas and it is important that they are reached with the gospel while they are young.

Not only is the rural minister meeting human needs now but he is also building for the future. A sincere and consecrated pastor has unlimited opportunities to meet human needs in rural areas. Once he has established himself with the people he will find many opportunities to serve his fellow man physically and spiritually and both are important. The rural minister is a social and spiritual engineer. He has the privilege of working with individuals to build a Christian society and this task will challenge the best thinking, imagination, creative spirit and consecration that a young man has to offer.

Suggestions For Recruiting

Some suggestions for recruiting for the rural ministry are given below.

1. Talk with those in your own church who might be interested in rural work and encourage them to think seriously and pray about it.
2. Encourage those interested to do rural church work during the summer. By doing this they will help a church and will discover from practical experience whether or not they like work of this type.
3. Take advantage of every opportunity to speak to youth groups about the challenge of full time Christian service in rural areas. High school students would be one of the groups which should hear this presentation. Encourage the young people to talk with you about the possibilities of service in church vocations.
4. Secure the latest information concerning the present needs for workers from the Student Volunteer Movement, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, or from your denominational headquarters.
5. Send the names of those interested to the Student Volunteer Movement and the names will be sent on to the proper denominational offices.
6. Present the needs of the church for workers from the pulpit, in newspaper articles, on the radio and by any other means available.
7. Encourage people to think of all worthy vocations as Christian vocations.
8. Follow up those young people who you know are preparing themselves for the rural ministry and encourage them to stick with their decision. There are many temptations for young people in colleges and seminaries which tend to lure them away from the rural field.
9. The rural church needs active laymen as well as ministers. Encourage those who are interested in rural life to support their church and minister in an active program which will Christianize the countryside.
10. Be an example of a good rural pastor. What you do will be more important than what you say to those who know you. Be sure that you are completely dedicated to rural life and the rural church.

The Most Hopeful Man

• W. A. MacLeod of the Canadian Co-operative Wheat Producers Limited, Winnipeg, Canada, sent us a Christmas message as follows:

"The most hopeful man on earth is the prairie farmer. His crop this year may have been partly or wholly destroyed by drought, flood, excessive heat, hail, frost: but he is confidently preparing to seed next spring the acres that gave him such disappointing returns this year.

"Distracted statesmen of the allied nations, trying to get Europe on its feet, have come to the conclusion that food, clothing and shelter are not enough. What Europe needs most, and will perish without, is hope.

"If Solomon were alive today, he might give the world a new proverb: 'Go to the farmer thou pessimist; consider his ways and be wise.' "

A Russian Spiritual

• My God and I go in the field together. We walk and talk as good friends should and do. We clasp our hands; our voices ring with laughter. He tells me of the years that went before me, when heavenly plans were made for me to be, when all was but a dream of dim conception to come to life, earth's verdant glory see. My God and I will go for aye together. We'll walk and talk and jest as good friends do. The earth will pass and with it common trifles, but God and I will go unendingly.

—From *The Gospel Trumpet,* Anderson, Indiana.

"Fireside Gatherings"

IVAN M. CASH

"Fireside Gatherings" is the name given to a series of neighborhood gatherings sponsored by the church. The plan has been used in different parishes with equally fine results. It has proved a means of ministering to families outside of the church. The family as a unit is given an opportunity to share together with other families of the neighborhood in an evening of enjoyment and inspiration.

The fact is that people are far more apt to accept an invitation to a neighbor's home for a church function than to accept an invitation to the church. This plan can be adapted to different situations in the village or in the open country.

The Plan

This plan should be worked out by a representative group or church council. The parish is first divided into neighborhoods. Streets in the village may be grouped and certain roads in the country. A home with adequate room must be selected in each neighborhood. In each case the hostess is asked to personally invite as many of her neighbors as possible.

Committees for all the gatherings are selected. There should be a social and a refreshment committee for each gathering. There might well be an attendance or publicity committee. It is well to have the same kind of light refreshments for each group. The social committee should meet together and plan the social time for each and provide whatever equipment is needed.

Invitations are prepared giving general nature of the gatherings, the time and listing all the homes, the date and day. Indicate that the family is invited to the gathering checked or underlined. The people are invited to attend only the one in their own neighborhood but they may select another if they cannot attend that one. There is greater enthusiasm and carry over when all the people of the parish are invited to a gathering about the same time. I have held as many as five Fireside Gatherings within a week and a half. Then in other series they have been held one each week until the whole parish has been covered.

The Evening Program

It is well to allow plenty of time for visiting as the people gather in the home. The social games follow for about an hour. The Worship period is usually planned and led by the pastor. This has included Hymns, Scripture, Prayer, Poems, Special Music and a brief message by the pastor. The reading of a One Act Religious Play by selected persons but without action may be used for a message. The worship is followed by the refreshments which should be furnished by the church people with others as guests. The evening is usually closed with a good old fashioned hymn sing.

Results

The results will depend very largely upon how much work, planning and calling is done both by the pastor and people. One advantage of having one each week makes it possible for the pastor to call on all the families inviting them to attend the gathering. This kind of calling helps the pastor to get into all the homes and gives the people something definite to do. Care must be taken not to miss any families which should be invited.

Out in the country I have found that as many as three-fourths of those usually attending did not usually attend church. It is often possible to hold a gathering in the home of people outside the church.

"The Best Calf in his Pasture"

• One of our rural pastors tells, in the following words, how he discovered the Lord's Acre Plan:

"The church was behind with our salary. I asked one of the trustees if they could raise some money for me, because my family was almost destitute and the grocerman wished to know why I had not paid my bill which was long past due. The trustee said that he paid his bills and he did not see why others could not do the same. He turned around and walked away.

"The hurt was pretty deep. Then, something new dawned upon me. There was a way out, the Lord's Acre Plan. I drove out to see one of the other trustees. I told him the story and said if every man would sign up with the Lord's Acre Plan it would bring sufficient funds to take care of our financial problems. He said it sounded good and offered a challenge. If I could get thirty-five signers, he would give the best calf in his pasture.

"I started on the job the next morning. Now, I didn't go to the members of the church first, as some might think. I canvassed the unchurched. By the next evening I had thirty-five signers. I drove out to this trustee's place, showed him the list and watched him read the names off.

"He would say, 'My! here is old Sam Jones.' And so on, all the way down the page. His eyes were as big as two fried eggs. I had the pleasure of selecting the best calf in the pasture, and he had some good ones. Then, we began the canvass of the church members."

—Contributed by
THOMAS ALFRED TRIPP

Sonnet

(Inspired by a phrase of Rupert Brooke)

Out on the wind of Time, our hearts are borne
In swift succession through the rain and sun.
Bravely, with dreams for wings, they greet each morn
And, weary when the day's full course is run,
Find sorrow's surcease in the balm of night
And rest to fashion lovely thoughts anew
As pinions for tomorrow's certain flight.
On winds again, through skies now dull, now blue,
Serenely will they journey on, our hearts,
Though shaken by fierce unrelenting storms
And wounded by pain's many-thousand forms;
For life is kind who with her stress imparts
A love that beckons courage, quiets fears,
And rides the wind of Time beside our years.

DOROTHEA O. BENNER

Country Ramblings

• To the man who was born on the farm and later finds it necessary to move to the city, there is nothing quite so pleasant and satisfying as rambling throughout the countryside. To get away from the noise and din of the city and feel yourself a part of growing corn, blooming flowers, and the beauties of God's great out-of-doors, is but little less than heaven. It has been the lot of the writer to fit into many rural situations during the past several months. A pastorate of 11 years in a fine rural church tones one for a ministry to rural folk as his life's work.

For the average minister, any opportunity to leave the active work of the pastorate must present a challenge to minister in a field which is near and dear to his heart. My present relationship to a state council intrigued me because I was given opportunity to give half time to the work of town and country churches.

Great Opportunity

In this field, there is great opportunity in Kingdom advance. To spend much time in assisting pastors in three rural counties to take a look at their field, survey it and discern its possibilities for more effective work, is to see the great challenge which lies right close by to any rural church. Rich fields for endeavor loom in any community, rural as well as city.

Why certain pastors have a yen for the large city church when there is so much to be done in the country, and the opportunity to work with God's noble souls who till the soils is on every hand, provokes a question of good judgment to this rambling rural worker.

To bring the message of God's great love and wonderful beneficence to the combined membership of a rural parish of 7 churches in an observance of Rural Life Sunday, to eat with them at the noon hour (fried chicken, pies, etc.), and to fellowship with them is a treat denied to many of God's spokesmen who must live midst towering buildings and the ceaseless throngs of humanity. Or to go into that small rural church where but a few come Sunday after Sunday—yet, in their determination to keep the church alive, are willing to make their consecration to serve the few—is likewise rich in the Home Mission challenge it affords.

Assisting Young People

Or to go out and assist consecrated young people to minister to the needs of the roving migrant groups who come into our state for seasonable labor is a pleasant task. Many of these folk away from home yearn for the friendly touch of someone who seeks to know their needs and render a bit of service to them. How their faces glow with a broad smile when these workers think enough of them to make a call in their humble shacks and assist in providing some of the basic needs for their comfort!

How little faces beam with satisfaction when the teacher in a Vacation Church School gives a small gift as a reward for memory work or a project completed! To those who thus labor, the compensations are rich and not soon forgotten. Such have been the ramblings of one who loves rural folk and likes to work with them.

—Lawrence N. Main,
Associate Secretary,
Illinois Church Council

Catholic Rural Leaders' Recreation Conference

• Seventy-five young Roman Catholic men and women gathered at Camp Aurora, Walworth, Wisconsin, for a week's study of recreation for Catholic rural parishes. The session was the first of its kind, and was sponsored by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. Consideration was given to both the philosophical backgrounds of the subject and to various techniques of group recreation. The Rt. Rev. Msgr. L. G. Ligutti was present as Conference Chaplain and one of the instructors. (It is reported that Msgr. Ligutti is expert in both the philosophy and the technique of recreation.)

Education for Survival

• An address on the above subject was given by Griscom Morgan at the Fourth Annual Conference on the Small Community. Included were the following statements, as published in *Community Service News,* Yellow Springs, Ohio, September-October issue:

"The tradition of urban civilization is one of directing our efforts toward doing great things, to the exclusion of being great people. A graphic analogy is the story of a man living in a house near a wooded pathway. Many people used the pathway and, being a considerate person, this man put a candle in the window to light the way. But he had an idiot son who thought, 'If a little light is good, why not have more?' So this son touched a match to the house until there was a glorious blaze of light, followed, of course, by complete darkness. Our civilization might be likened to that.

"We are exhausting our finest human resources in order to make a great show of achievement. We are exploiting our powers in outer performance and ignoring the inner being. We are increasing our power and wealth, but not the qualities which would make us a great people. George Bernard Shaw once said that greatness must express itself in quiet living as well as in tremendous outbursts of energy; that there may be as good a biological reason for the work-shy as for the work-mad. In our analogy, there was greatness in the building of the house as well as the apparent greatness of the light which came of burning it down.

"Today we find the opinion that the significant life is that spent in spectacular performances. We leave inadequate time and energy to be parents and people. Continued civilization depends on greatness of personality in the small communities among the common people. This is the greatness which will survive. Such greatness will require a vitality that we may be long in recovering."

On Pounding a Nail

• Labor-saving devices and the new leisure are admittedly related to our new national high of 600,000 mental patients and of other millions living what Thoreau called "lives of quiet desperation". As we withdraw from manual work, we lose spiritually a moral quality and an essential therapy.

When we say that occasional, if not constant, work with our hands is needful—beyond any consideration of healthful exercise or wages—what does that mean in Christian terms? It means, among other things, that it was no coincidence that Jesus was a carpenter.

Creative Preoccupation

Certainly much manual activity releases the mind from immediate concerns to larger ones. There are musicians who tackle life decisions only at their keyboard, there are millworkers who overcome grief by working a longer shift for a while, and there is Robert Frost whose mind best frames a poem as he splits cordwood. The instructions for saying rosary beads call for moving of the lips as the Hail Marys and Our Fathers are repeated—with simultaneous contemplation of certain divine mysteries far removed from these prayers. Behind these varieties is the truth that while our conscious is busied with familiar chores of hand and thought, our unconscious (whatever that may be) is freed to roam afar to its own greater tasks.

Most vivid instances of this occur in a group working manually together in agreed silence. Hand cooperates with hand, but an arranged preoccupation keeps all from giving themselves wholly to the immediate situation and company.

A Christian "team" working together in disciplined silence discovers new relationships within its circle, and between each member and the realm all are exploring.

So although we say manual work "keeps our mind occupied", rather it keeps occupied only that restless fore-part of our mental self, releasing our deeper mind in a quest for serenity and meaning. Often as adequately as psychotherapy, narcotherapy, musicotherapy, and the other techniques of modern psychiatry, simple work enables us to live in a subtler consciousness.

Know Work, Know Reality

Further—though we must avoid sentimentality about the "nobleness" of work—Christians who toil with their hands find some identity with the vast majority of mankind who work manually to live. A dowager observed after a charity reception: "Hard-handed women! Not my social group, I'm afraid." Any of us who seek to share the common lot, and to know our fellows as they are, cannot find manual work beneath our dignity or choice.

But a chief meaning of hand toil is the direct analogy it provides for conceptual thinking. To "lay a foundation", "shore up an argument", "nail down presuppositions", "weave a fabric", "drive a point home", "dull the mind", "mold opinion", "uproot prejudice", "cultivate friends," "break through barriers", "cement relations", "go against the grain",—every such metaphor clarifies thinking only as it carries an immediate picture of a process. Like the artist who glanced often at a clear ruby "to keep pure his absolute color", abstract thinkers do well to return constantly to the logic of work itself. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work", speaks of that continuity of spiritual and this-worldly fact which is the great meaning of the Incarnation.

The fact is that only in physical toil do we know actual, final achievement. Among intangibles, even the man of faith has the frustrating sense that no job is quite completely finished. But the moral satisfaction of sawing a straight cut, or pounding a nail cleanly home, is an absolute. God Himself speaks through such naïve and direct experience of His own completeness and achievement.

—Kirkridge Contour

(Kirkridge is a Christian group under a discipline, a retreat-and-study center in the Pennsylvania Appalachians, and a movement for power within the Church. Its address is Bangor, Pennsylvania.)

Somebody said:

"Cooperation means: Do what I say—and do it darn quick!"

Don't you believe it!

Cooperation is as different from obedience as an orchestra is from a firing squad.

Cooperation means the voluntary participation of many people. It chooses its own leadership.

"In shooing flies or hauling freight
It's wiser to cooperate.
Now that's a trick all horses know—
They learned it centuries ago.

One tail, on duty at the rear,
Can't reach the fly behind the ear—
But two tails, if arranged with craft,
Give full protection—fore and aft."

Calvin

• John Calvin is catching the spotlight again. He lived amid revolutionary upheavals, so he assumes new interest in our cataclysmic period.

In the midst of this renewed interest the American Tract Society, New York, announces the release of its latest book, *John Calvin: Many-Sided Genius*, $1.50. This new appraisal stands out even in the growing collection of books for and against Calvin. It is written by a remarkable man. Sir Alfred T. Davies is a lawyer who became a great educator.

In the Periodicals

• *International Journal of Religious Education,* Chicago, Ill., December 1947, publishes "Young People in the Rural Church," by Eugene Smathers, Minister of Calvary Parish (Presbyterian U.S.A.), Big Lick, Tenn. Mr. Smathers stresses the primacy of the family and the dignity of work as values upon which the church should build its program.

In the *Michigan Christian Advocate,* Adrian, Mich., November 27, 1947, Arthur Wentworth Hewitt writes about "The Heresy of 'Rural Inferiority.'" This article is a frank discussion of a vital issue.

The Church Advocate, Harrisburg, Pa., December 10, 1947, publishes "The Rural Church," by Mark Rich, Secretary of the Town and Country Committee of the American Baptist Home Mission Society. This is an abstract of an address delivered at the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country at Rochester, N. Y., November 6, 1947.

A rural school teacher writes about "The Opportunities of a Christian Rural School Teacher" in the *Rural Lutheran,* Minneapolis, Minn., December 1947.

In *Advance,* New York, N. Y., December 1947, Thomas Alfred Tripp writes about "Saving Marginal Rural Churches." Dr. Tripp defines a marginal church as "one which is unable to operate successfully under its own power," and says that "many marginal churches would be relatively strong if they were to pool their resources in maintaining leadership and program."

The Pastor, Nashville, Tenn., December 1947, features an article by Ray F. Magnuson under the title of "The Rural Church Looks Toward General Conference." Mr. Magnuson says that major church boards, in order to deal intelligently with rural problems, should draw a certain proportion of their membership from rural pastors and rural laymen.

Science News Letter, Washington, D. C., December 6, 1947, publishes "Good Neighbor Farms," by Martha G. Morrow. This article describes the program of the National Agricultural Institute, a cooperative project of the governments of Guatemala and the United States to improve crops that are essential to feed the world.

The story of the long efforts of farmers to improve their position through cooperatives, as told before a major congressional committee, is featured in the *National Union Farmer,* Denver, Colo., December 1947, under the title of "Patton and Thatcher Lead Defense of Cooperatives," by Roy F. Hendrickson.

The Rural Messenger, New York, N. Y., November 1947, reports the program of the three Rural Institutes which were conducted by the National Council of the Episcopal Church last summer, under the title of "Student Field Service Gives Preparation for Rural Work." At each of these institutes academic classroom study was augmented by supervised experience in open country and small town.

Our Church in Town and Country, Dayton, Ohio, January 1948, contains several articles of interest to those concerned with the rural church and its problems. Among them are "The Relation of Soils and Souls," by Harold R. Megill; "The Training of the Rural Minister," by C. R. Swartz; "Why Some Rural Churches Lack Vitality," by R. A. Heim; "The Rural Pastor as a Counselor," by Russell Hoy; and "A Suggested Rural Church Institute Program," by B. H. Cain. This journal is published by the Board of Missions of The Evangelical United Brethren Church.

In *America,* New York, N. Y., December 27, 1947, William J. Gibbons reports the twenty-fifth National Catholic Rural Life Conference, which was held in Lafayette, Louisiana, November 23-26, 1947. This article bears the title of "Toward a Rural Catholicism." The NCRLC chose the Evangeline country of Louisiana for their convention, hoping to draw more attention to the vital connection that exists between souls and soil.

The work of the circuit-riding Methodist preacher, Rev. James Thomas Majors, of Cumberland Furnace, Tenn., is told in the *Washington Post,* Washington, D. C., November 2, 1947, under the title of "Circuit Rider of Today."

The story of a Lord's Acre project at Byron, New York, which netted more than $8,000 for world relief projects through interfaith channels, is told in the *Presbyterian Rural Fellowship Bulletin,* Syracuse, N. Y., Winter 1947-1948, under the title of "Lord's Acres for World."

The *Methodist Rural Fellowship Bulletin,* Westminster, Md., Fall 1947, publishes three articles by rural ministers. They are: "A Practical Step in Rural Fellowship," by Douglas Ingram Cloud of Coatesville, Pa.; "Don't Waste Your Steam," by Donald H. James of Titonka, Iowa; and "The Rural Minister's Salary and Living," by Charles J. Sabin of Morris, N. Y.

Rural Churchmen's Seminar in Washington

• The second Rural Churchmen's Seminar, sponsored by the social education and action agencies of four denominations in cooperation with the rural church departments of the same denominations, is announced for Washington, D. C. February 24-27, 1948. The denominational organizations cooperating are those of the Congregational-Christian Churches, Northern Baptist Convention, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and the Women's Division of the Methodist Church. The United Council of Church Women is a cooperating group.

The main attention will be given to discussions of pending legislation affecting agricultural and rural affairs.

Further information may be secured through the offices of the denominations mentioned. Rev. Shirley E. Greene, Merom, Indiana, will also assist any persons wishing further information.

Book Review

Hymns Of The Rural Spirit. Published by the Commission on Worship of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, New York, 1947. 35 cents a copy postpaid; rates on quantities.

"Life is the gift of nature but the beauty of living is wisdom," in the words of an unknown Greek sage of long ago. To bring beauty into the living of women and men and girls and boys is no small task and calls for more than ordinary wisdom and insight. Furthermore, to make such beauty attractive as well as functionable for its avowed purpose is an achievement of note. This, it seems to this observer, is what the editors and compilers of *Hymns of the Rural Spirit* have accomplished in no little degree.

The 128 page book has combined in it a dignity, a simplicity and a sincerity that well-nigh give it a flavor of folk-song-religion—qualities which commend it to any leader of worship who cherishes only the best for town-country parishes. Painstaking research of hymns and poetry, as well as materials of music, has resulted in selections and combinations of poetry and tunes that carry an authentic note throughout the one-hundred-twenty-eight pages. The wide variety of national and racial sources of tunes and hymns is a most commendable feature of the collection.

These are well-balanced both as to number and in the use of older and familiar as well as contemporary materials. The significant periods of Christian hymn-writing on the particular subject of God in nature are well represented. Translations show unusual faithfulness in preserving the spirit of the original. No effort seems to have been made to use older selections in order to bow to tradition any more than to include contemporary hymns and tunes for the sake of newness and modernity.

The book represents the honest efforts of devoted Christian leaders to gather into a comparatively small, handy, salable volume the best materials available for the particular purpose and consumers for which the compilation is intended.

A few special features should be pointed out. First of all, the children of the parishes have not been forgotten, for there are some fine children's hymns. The topical arrangement is clear and concise. Some high-type recreation material has been added, making the book more useful. Tunes have been set in singable arrangements with comfortable voice-range compass, without loss of intrinsic values in the music. The liturgical section, although not extensive, is well-selected and adaptable to worship purposes. *Hymns of the Rural Spirit* very well meets the aims of the editors as stated in the preface:

"This volume is intended to supplement the ordinary hymnal, thus making generally available a wider variety of rural hymns. It is hoped not only that it may find an acceptable place in local churches, but also that it may be useful in rural life festivals, in camps, in conferences, and in other gatherings related to rural life." The book is indeed a "Welcome to God's Country"—Philip Pitchers's opening salutation on the title page.

—Gustav A. Lehman, *Director of Music, Colgate-Rochester Divinity School*

Sterling College

• At Sterling College, Sterling, Kansas, there have been two recent events looking toward the closer relationship of the church and the college to American rural life. The college is an institution of the United Presbyterian Church.

First, a small discussion conference was held. Ministers and other community leaders met to consider the place of the rural church in all social and technical programs of community advancement. It was agreed that a larger conference should be held at which all interested agencies should be represented.

Thus, the first annual institute on town and country community life was held in the fall. Among those attending were, in addition to the church people, officers from farm bureaus, schools, cooperatives, chambers of commerce, and civic groups.

Dr. Frank Richard, the Chairman of the Conference and minister at Partridge, declared: "Whatever affects the welfare of man, his physical being, his environment, his work, his home, his culture, his mind, his spirit, are all the concern of vital religion. His body as well as his soul is the handiwork of God."

The Enlarged Town & Country Church

• We have doubled the size of Town and Country Church.

The Committee on Town and Country decided to take this step as a venture of faith. Receipts from subscriptions have thus far been sufficient to provide an eight-page but not a sixteen-page journal. The hope is that there will be many interested cooperators who will say so many good words about Town and Country Church that we will have enough subscribers, even at the present subscription rate, to carry the venture.

What You Can Do

There is no central promotion fund for Town and Country Church. It can only be promoted by the interested boards and agencies and by the ministers themselves. Will you, therefore, take responsibilty for:

1. Asking for circulars and sample copies;
2. Announcing the Journal at ministerial association meetings;
3. Seeing that Town and Country Church is announced at all rural church conferences;
4. Sending us material for publication.